



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

September 28, 2006

TO: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley *[Signature]*
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – RITES OF
PASSAGE RESIDENTIAL CENTER GROUP HOMES, WEXHAM WAY
GROUP HOME, AND SYCAMORE GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Wexham Way and Sycamore Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Rites of Passage Residential Center Group Homes, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Wexham Way and Sycamore Group Homes are each six-bed facilities, which provide care for boys ages 13 – 17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, both Group Homes were providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children.

Both Group Homes are located in the Second District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address a few deficient areas.

Both Group Homes need to provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

Sycamore Group Home needs to maintain current Needs and Services Plans; maintain current authorizations and accurate distribution logs for children taking psychotropic medication; and provide children with opportunities to attend religious services of their choice.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:jdh

http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Turesi Faniel, Executive Director, Rites of Passage Residential Center
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Rites of Passage
Residential Center I - Wexham Way
1255 Wexham Way
Inglewood, California 90302
Phone: (310) 671-5651
License Number: 198200103
Rate Classification Level: 10**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Wexham Way Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews:

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive

unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews:

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

- 1. Rites of Passage Residential Center Group Home management provide children with the required minimum weekly allowances.**

**Rites of Passage
Residential Center II - Sycamore
1617 South Sycamore Street
Los Angeles, California 90019
Phone: (323) 937-0680
License Number: 197603490
Rate Classification Level: 10**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Sycamore Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs for one child are comprehensive, and include short and long term goals. However, the other child does not have a current NSP.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

1. Rites of Passage Residential Center Group Home management maintain current Needs and Services Plans for all children.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents****Comments:**

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. However, one child did not have a current court authorization for his medication.

Medication distribution logs are not accurately maintained for one child. The medication being given to the child as noted on the distribution log is different from the medication authorized by the psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations**2. Rites of Passage Residential Center Group Home management:**

- a. Maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medication.**
- b. Maintain accurate medication logs for all children taking psychotropic medication.**

VI. Personal Rights**Method of assessment –Interviews with children**

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. However, children are not able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

- 3. Rites of Passage Residential Center Group Home management provide children with opportunities to attend religious services of their choice.**

VII. Clothing and Allowance**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews****Sample size for interviews: Two****Comments:**

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are given opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Children spend their allowances as they choose, however; the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

4. Rites of Passage Residential Center Group Home management provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

rites of passage residential centers, inc.
3870 Crenshaw Boulevard, Suite 908
Los Angeles, Ca 90008
(323) 931-5610 Office (323) 931-2531 Fax

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Department of Auditor Controller
Children's Group Home Ombudsman
500 West Temple Street, Room 515-A
Los Angeles CA 90012-2766

Attention: Candance Rhue
Group Home Auditor Supervisor
Department of Auditor-Controller
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administrator

This letter is in response to the Corrective Action Plan

Rites of Passage 1 Wexham Way, Inglewood CA

Section VI Personal Rights

The group home will ensure that children will be provided the opportunity to attend religious services of their choice. When the religious services are outside the proximity of the group home, children will be permitted to pursue their religious choice(s) with (a) CSW consent, (b) appropriate notice and/or (c) chaperone approved by their CSW. The facility manager will assist the child in making arrangement to pursue their religious and in contacting their CSW for necessary approval.

The facility manager will be responsible for the ensuring that the request is made. The administrator will verify that the children's request has been honored.

Section VII Clothing and Allowance

The group home will implement and change the amount of the allowance That the children will receive. The residents will receive a minimum of \$7.00 and a maximum of \$20.00 as per the level system. The change will become effective immediately.

The Facility Manager will be responsible to ensure that the residents will receive the increase in the allowance as per the change in the level system.

Rites of Passage 2, 1617 S. Sycamore Ave Los Angeles, CA

Section II Program Services

The treatment team reviewed the child's records and their Needs and Assessment was completed immediately.

We have reviewed the current policy and procedures and have updated the Procedures to ensure that the Needs and Assessments will be completed in a timely manner. The Program Manager will ensure that the Needs and Assessments are completed as designated. The Administrator will ensure that the Needs and Assessments are completed in a timely manner.

Section V. Psychotropic Medication

Currently, we are requesting Court Authorization for medication updates 30 days in advance. We will restructure the procedure to make the request within 45 days prior to ensure receiving approved documentation from the courts.

Facility managers will check daily for documentation of the medication. Managers will ensure that the medication has been given and /or if, the resident has refused his medication it will be documented in the file.

Section VI Personal Rights

The group home will ensure that children will be provided the opportunity to attend religious services of their choice. When the religious services are outside the proximity of the group home, children will be permitted to pursue their religious choice(s) with (a) CSW consent, (b) appropriate notice and/or (c) chaperone approved by their CSW. The facility manager will assist the child in making arrangement to pursue their religious and in contacting their CSW for necessary approval.

The facility manager will be responsible for the ensuring that the request is made. The administrator will verify that the children's request has been honored.

Section VII Clothing and Allowance

The group home has implemented and changed the amount of the allowance that the child will receive. They were receiving a minimum of \$5.00 and maximum of \$15.00 as per the level plan. We have immediately implemented the change where the children now receive a minimum of \$7.00 and a maximum of \$20.00 per week as designated in our allowance level system.

The facility Manager will ensure that the residents receive the amount of the new rate change. The Program Manager is responsible to ensure that the above referenced information is implemented. (See attached).

Should you require any additional information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at (323) 931-5610.

Thanking you in advance for your assistance in this matter.
I will be faxing the document and sending one to you via US mail.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Turesi Faniel', is written over the word 'Sincerely'.

Turesi Faniel

Allowance Determination

Each resident will receive an individual evaluation summarizing his behaviors displayed during the previous week. Behavioral areas have a corresponding level and accompanying monetary values which are summed to determine a resident's weekly allowance. Once the seven behavioral categories have been added, the resident's level and weekly allowance can be determined.

MAXIMUM BEHAVIOR POINTS:

Morning Routines	15 Points per Day	105 Points per Week
After School Routines	10 Points per Day	45 Points per Week
Activity Routines	10 Points per Day	70 Points per Week
Evening Routines	15 Points per Day	105 Points per Week
Emancipation Activities		25 Points per Week
Therapy Points		15 Points per Week
School Points		10 Points per Week
TOTALS:	50 Points per Day	375 Points per Week

Residents have the ability to earn **32 points per Day** without earning extra points, however, he must earn all of his Emancipation, Therapy, and School points during that week.

ALLOWANCE RANGE:

	275-300	\$17.00 per Week
Honor Level	255-274	\$14.00 per Week
Level Three	240-254	\$12.00 per Week
Level Two	220-239	\$ 9.00 per Week
Minimum Allowance/	0-219	\$ 7.00 per Week

Orientation

Each resident is required to sign the allowance request form indicating that he has received his allowance.